Railway Servants (Discipline & Appeal) Rules. Proposal to exclude sugar from PDS

*348. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government arc considering a proposal to excrudc sugar from the public distribution system;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Kerala Government has opposed this move as it will result in the increase in the prices of sugar particularly in non-producing States like Kerala; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) and (b) The Mahajan Committee constituted to study and make recommendations in respect of the sugarcane and sugar sectors, has submitted its report on 15.4.1998. One of the recommendations of the Committee is to discontinue supply of sugar to the PDS. It has been suggested that this may be phased out over a period of 2 years. It has also been suggested that the statutory levy percentage be reduced to 20% from the beginning of the next sugar season, and that it be retained at that level for two years. After the expiry of these two years, the collection of levy sugar from mills be abolished. Further, if Government wishes to continue PDS, the sugar be obtained at market prices from mills.

The views of the concerned Ministries/ Departments, as well as State Governments/UT Administrations, have been called for on the suggestion for discontinuance of sugar from PDS. In this connection, a meeting under the Chairmanship of Minister of Food & Consumer Affairs was held on 25.6.98 in which the State Ministers for Food & Civil Supplies were invited and their views in the matter were ascertained. The Matter is under exmination in the Government.

(c) and (d) Yes, the Government of Kerala has expressed reservations in regard to the suggestion of discontinuance of sugar from PDS. The views of the Government of Kerala, as well as of other States/UTs, are under consideration in the Government.

Administering of spurious Polio Drop Vaccines

*349. SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:
SHRI N.R. DASARI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly 65000 children in Western UP were administered spurious polio drop vaccines imported from Belgium during the last pulse polio programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any enquiry has been conducted into the matter; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) to (d) Oral Polio Vaccine is administered to children under Universal Immunization Programme and under Pulse Polio Immunization Programme. Under Universal Immunization Programme, polio vaccine is administered in three doses, first at the age of six weeks, second at the age of 10 weeks and the third at the age of 14 weeks and a booster dose is given when the child is 1-1/2 years old. Under Pulse Polio Programme all children below the age of five years are given polio vaccine twice a year, once in December and again in the following January. Oral Polio vaccine for both these programmes is procured from Indian manufacturers and some vaccine is obtained as commodity

assistance from various donor agencies. During 1997-98, 195 lakh doses of polio vaccine was received as donor assistance at Medical Stores Depot, Karnal and out of this 20 lakh doses manufactured by Smithkline Beecham of Belgium was supplied to Uttar Pradesh. In addition to the donor agencies checking the quality of the vaccine they procure, the Government of India gets the vaccine tested, when it is received in a port, at the Central the vaccine tested, when it is received in a port, at *t*he Central Drug Laboratory of Central Research Institute, Kasauli and only when the vaccine is found of acceptable quality it is allowed to be despatched to States. Therefore the vaccine supplied to Uttar Pradesh in 1997-98 was of good quality. It was not spurious polio vaccine in any sense.

In June, 1998 some newspaper reports came to the notice of Government of India alleging that lives of 65,000 children had been endangered in Ghaziabad due to use of spurious imported oral polio vaccine. Immediately, Government constituted a high level Technical Committee on 25th June with Head of the Department of Microbiology in All India Institute of Medical Sciences as the leader of the team, Addl. Professor of Paediatrics in AIIMS, Asst. Commissioner in the Department of Family Welfare and Joint Director (Immunization) Uttar Pradesh Government as members. The report of the Committee has been received on 30th June. The Committee has visited Ghaziabad and Lucknow in addition to making field enquiries in Ghaziabad.

The Technical Committee has found that imported vaccine was received and stored at Medical Stores Depot, Karnal. Before the vaccine was despatched by Karnal it was tested at Kasauli and was found satisfactory. From MSD Karnal, vaccine was supplied to the Vaccine Store of Uttar Pradesh Government in Lucknow in September, 1997. Samples of this vaccine at Lucknow were also tested in Kasauli and were found satisfactory. From the Vaccine Store in Lucknow, the vaccine was issued to Ghaziabad District in March '98 and during its storage in Ghaziabad, samples sent to NICD, Delhi in April-May 1998 were also found satisfactory. Thus upto May '98 vaccine was effective.

It seems this vaccine lost its potency after May '98 because the colour monitors affixed on the vials of polio vaccine showed change of colour to a degree signifying loss of effectiveness when the team inspected this lot of vaccine in Ghaziabad during its enquiry. The Committee has found that the district and Field Officers of U.P. Government in Ghaziabad do not seem to have given attention to change in colour of vial monitors and they continued to administer the vaccine till the news items appeared in the newspapers. The Committee has found that the most probable reason for the somewhat early loss of effectiveness of the vaccine is its storage for fairly long a period in Lucknow in Ice Lined Refrigerators at a temperature of 2-8° C whereas for long storage, vaccine is required to be kept in Deep Freezers at a temperature of -18° C. The committee has stated that the Oral Polio Vaccine if administered to children even after it has lost its potency, does not cause any danger to the lives of the children nor does it directly contribute to any other harmful effects except that the child remains susceptible to the infection by polio virus and its consequences. Hence such children need to be re-immunized with potent vaccine.

On receipt of the report from the committee, the Govt, of Uttar Pradesh has been advised to take the following remedial actions:

(i) The children who were vaccinated with the OPV in question at Ghaziabad should be re-vaccinated immediately.

(ii) All health functionaries (medical and para medical) who handle

vaccines must be trained specially on the concept and handling of the vaccine vials which have Vaccine Vial Monitors imprinted on them.

It would be clear from the foregoing, that no spurious vaccine has been used in the immunization programme nor has the health and well being of children been endangered. The State Govt, has been advised to re-immunize these children who might have been recently given ineffective polio vaccine during last 2 months in Ghaziabad. The other State Governments have also been altered about taking safeguards against occurence of such incidents.

Probe into the Affairs of KVS

*350. SHRI RAGHAVJI:
SHRI PARAG CHALIHA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether some MPs have recently approached him with a request to order a high level/judicial probe into the alleged multifarious irregularities indulged in the affairs of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan by and/cr at the instance of former Ministers of Human Resource Development during 1991—97;

(b) if so, the details of the allegations and complainants; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) Shri Shiv Charan Singh, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha has submitted a Note dated 2nd April, 1998 for Judicial Enquiry into the alleged administrative and financial corruption in Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan for the period 1991—97. The details of allegation are given in the statement, *(see* below).

The relevant records are being verified in the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Development for an appropriate decision in the matter.

Statement

Alleged administrative and financial corruption indulged in by Authorities (Chairman & Vice-Chairman) and Officers of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan during (i) 1991—96 and (ii) 1996-97

SI. No,	1991—96 Instance	SI. No.	1996-97 Instance
1.	Generating and nurturing a brigade of 1500 SURPLUS teachers in Kendriya Vidyalaya having no vacancies for them and thereby causing an annual loss of about Rs. 15 Crores since 1991, June,	1.	Scandulous purchase of Computers as detected by Human Resource Development Standing Committee headed by Shri. S.I3. Chavan
2.	"Special Despensation admissions" literally on sale @5000 per annum and at the cost of children of entitled categories	2.	Nurturing the legacy of surplus teachers and generating newer varieties.

1